

Hartford Ad-Hoc Committee on Emergency Shelter

9/30/21 - Meeting Minutes - 5:00 PM

Committee Members present: Becca White (Chair), Ally Tufenkjian (Vice-chair), Simon Dennis (Secretary), Tom Pelitier, Bryan Luikart, Jon Chaffee

Community Members: Barrel Herrick, Scott Seblan, Sue Bukholz, Lani Collins, Heidi Duto, Sue-Ellen Parmenter, Paula Nulti

Becca called the meeting to order at 5:05 and invited participants to introduce themselves. All present introduced themselves.

Ally moved passage of the September 2nd Minutes, Bryan, Seconded. All were in favor and the minutes passed unanimously.

Bryan moved passage of the 9/16 Minutes for the cancelled meeting. Ally Seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Community Guidelines

Ally led the group through a discussion of discussion guidelines. She led a conversation about a suggested guidelines:

- Speak from your own experience
- Consider multiple perspectives
- Respect expertise
- Critique the issue, not the person
- Prioritize impact over intention
- Step up and step back
- Keep care at the core
- Speak in such a way that is inclusive of everyone, particularly the unhoused community members.

Becca asked what should happen if we “bump up against” one or multiple guidelines. It was proposed that we could adopt these guidelines at our next meeting at which point, the chair or others could remind members to follow them. Becca said that she would put the item on the next agenda and that members should bring additions and amendments to suggest at that time.

General Updates

Becca suggested that we may be at a good point in the process to present some recommendations to the Selectboard.

Becca announced that she would be stepping away from the Committee, but that she will prepare the agenda for the next meeting, and continue to serve as chair until a new Chair is elected at the next meeting.

RV Policy Update

Becca reported that the Committee had made a recommendation to the Town to revert back to state guidelines to allow for individuals to live in RVs and to allow up to three RVs to stay on a particular parcel. Some discussion followed about the RV process and status. It was agreed that the definition of an RV will be included in the minutes.

Recreational Vehicle is defined in the definitions section of Hartford's Zoning Regulations as: Any vehicle having all the following characteristics:

(1) used or constructed to permit its use as a conveyance on the public streets and highways; (2) used or constructed to permit its use as a dwelling or sleeping place for one or more persons; and (3) not capable of readily being connected to a community sewer and water service. Includes tent trailers, truck campers, and vehicles converted to sleeping facilities. Does not include mobile homes.

The Cold Weather Shelter at the Valley Bible Church is no longer on the table due to community concerns regarding the proposed shelter's proximity to a Child Care facility. It was suggested that this committee might play an important role in supporting alternate locations for a Cold Weather Shelter.

The Haven is working towards alternate options.

Simon agreed to reach out to Michael Redmond to learn more about these options.

Darrell Herrick suggested that the Town of Hartford may have unused buildings that could be used for a warming shelter. This should be investigated.

It was mentioned that the currently not-in-use Brookside Nursing Home should be revisited as a potential site.

Simon and Ally agreed to reach out to Montpelier Selectboard Members regarding their recent action to allow unhoused individuals to sleep in public spaces if no alternate option could be offered. Sue Ellen suggested that there could be an incentive offered to developers to develop a Cold Weather Shelter and the possibility that individual homeowners could offer shelter.

Tom said that individuals who offer shelter to unhoused members would transition their home into a public building which would ultimately suggest that the Fire Department would have jurisdiction as a public building. Becca asked if the general list of requirements could be shared with the Town. Tom said he would do so.

RV Zoning Regulation Modification Update

Tom reported he would need to review plans for specific projects.

Becca invited a motion to adjourn. Ally moved. Simon seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted.
Simon Dennis